

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
15 MARCH 1961

The Commission met, pursuant to notice at 9:30 a.m. with David E. Finley, Chairman, presiding.

Present were: David E. Finley
William G. Perry
Michael Rapuano
Felix W. de Weldon
Peter Hurd

L. R. Wilson, Secretary
C. H. Atherton, Asst. Secretary
C. L. Martin, Counsel

1. Submissions - Interviews

a. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

(1) National Bureau of Standards - Reactor Building

The Commission conferred with representatives of the Public Buildings Service and the National Bureau of Standards regarding the design of the Reactor Building for the Bureau of Standards facilities at Gaithersburg, Maryland. Mr. R. S. Walleigh, Associate Director for Administration, National Bureau of Standards, explained the site, function, and design of the proposed structure.

The design was approved with the recommendation that the chimney be treated as a freestanding element, and that the design of the entrance and vestibule be simplified. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations.

EXHIBIT A

(2) National Bureau of Standards - Landscaping for Laboratory Group

The members stated that they were unwilling to approve the planting scheme in its present form and recommended restudy. In their opinion the planting pattern, as shown in the scale model, was too geometric and they felt that a more open and informal scheme should be devised. The Commission therefore took no action pending the submission of a revised scheme.

EXHIBIT B

(3) Exterior Renovations, Executive Office Building, 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Mr. Rowland Snyder, Director, Architectural and Structural Division, Public Buildings Service, requested the Commission's advice on

suggested exterior repairs and renovations on the Executive Office Building, formerly the State, War and Navy Building. He explained that major changes to the roof had been recommended in a report by a consultant engineer and architect. The changes involved the chimneys, the ornamental iron work, and the dormers. The Report had been submitted to the Commission in 1958, but action on it had been deferred at that time because of the possible demolition of the building. He said that plans for repairs to the building had been reactivated because replacement of the building in the near future was no longer being contemplated.

The members agreed that the chimneys, dormers, iron railings, etc. should not be removed as proposed in the report. They suggested that the General Services Administration should make the necessary repairs to prevent damage by leakage, without changing the appearance of the building. In reply to Mr. Snyder's question about cleaning the building, the members recommended against sandblasting the building and stated that any cleaning should be limited to the removal of excess dirt.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT C

b. District of Columbia Government, Department of Highways and Traffic

(1) Federal Aid Interstate Highway Sign Standards

Mr. J. J. Grady, D.C. Bridge Architect, Department of Highways and Traffic, explained through the use of photographs of existing installations, the designs for signs and sign standards to be used on Federal interstate highways in the District. He outlined the relationship of the truss-type designs to the variety of engineering requirements confronted in a large scale highway system.

The members commented that they preferred a simple form standard, without decoration. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations. EXHIBIT D

(2) Anacostia River Bridge at Eleventh Street, S.E.

Mr. J. J. Grady, D. C. Bridge Architect, presented drawings showing the design of a twin-span bridge to be built over the Anacostia River at Eleventh Street, S.E. Mr. Grady explained that the changes in present design from that approved by the Commission in June, 1958, were the result of changes in the criteria of design and specifications imposed by the United States Bureau of Public Roads. He cited as an example, that the Bureau of Public Roads now requires a concrete parapet for the safety of drivers, which meant that the open type railing shown in the earlier design was no longer permitted.

The members agreed that the proportions of the piers and roadway were not as pleasing as the proportions in the original design, and they

recommended these relationships be reconsidered. They also suggested that every effort be made to eliminate the brackets unders the cantilever carrying the sidewalk. The design was approved in general, with the above suggestions.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendations.

EXHIBIT E

(3) Highway Approaches to the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge - Approach Structures 1205 and 1206

Representatives of the District Department of Highways and Traffic, the engineer and the architect, explained drawings showing the design of approach structures 1205 and 1206, which will actually form two levels of one structure providing access between the Inner Loop, the "E" Street Freeway and the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. After a general discussion of the design, the members expressed their reluctance to see such a structure at this location. In order to minimize the effect, they stressed their opinion that the material of the two spans should be designed in steel, not one in steel and one in stone as presented. It was further suggested that the masonry planting boxes shown in the design of one of the spans were unnecessary to the bridge and should be eliminated. Finally they recommended that both spans be painted a color resembling the stone abutments, and expressed their strong opposition to the use of any shade of green on the spans. The designers agreed to make these changes, and the Commission approved the general design.

The Chairman made public the prepared statement, which had been approved by the members at the executive session the previous day. (See EXHIBIT C, minutes of the meeting of March 14, 1961.)

c. District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency

Southwest Redevelopment Area C, Tenth Street Mall

The Commission conferred with Mr. John Searles, Executive Director of the District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency, and Mr. W. V. von Moltke, architect, regarding the design of the proposed Tenth Street Mall.

After Mr. von Moltke had explained the various aspects of his design for the treatment of the Mall, the members complimented him on the breadth and scale of the conception. They feared, however, that the steep grade required to cross the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks would detract greatly from its appearance, and Mr. von Moltke agreed that it was a serious handicap. The Commission's advice was to expend every effort to depress the elevation of the tracks in the vicinity of the Mall. The members pointed out that the effect of the 20 foot elevation in the Mall was not readily apparent in the drawings, but that a scale model with the tracks and resulting

hump in place would more graphically demonstrate the lost vista caused by the hump over the tracks.

Mr. Searles assured the Commission that the Redevelopment Land Agency recognized the desirability of getting rid of the railroad tracks and that another attempt would be made to explore the problem. The members agreed that the Commission should support the Redevelopment Land Agency in any way it can.

The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the views of the Commission. EXHIBIT F

d. District of Columbia Government, Department of Buildings and Grounds

(1) Doctors Residence, District of Columbia General Hospital

Mr. Gerald A. Purcell, architect-engineer of the District Department of Buildings and Grounds and Mr. Justement and Mr. Callmer of Justement, Elam, Callmer and Kidd, presented the design for a proposed doctors' residence at the D. C. General Hospital, and explained the details of the architectural treatment.

The members thought that the overall design of the building was acceptable, but suggested that the termination of the upper story and roofline was too abrupt. They requested the architect to restudy this feature, considering the use of a railing or similar element to complete the building.

The Commission withheld final approval of the design pending submission of a revised design of the upper story. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter reporting the Commission's recommendation. EXHIBIT G

(2) Consolidation of D. C. General Hospital

Mr. Louis Justement, architect, explained a program to consolidate the Main Building at D. C. General Hospital by connecting and enclosing the three existing 6-story structures, which are presently connected by corridors, at the first and ground floors, with new construction that will rise to the sixth floor. He explained that the additional space thus gained would permit the introduction of much needed facilities, as well as the rearrangement of some existing facilities. The architectural treatment and color brick used in the new work would match the existing building as nearly as possible.

After hearing Mr. Justement's explanation of the design, the members commended him for his solution to a difficult problem and approved the design. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's approval. EXHIBIT H

e. Treasury Department

✓ Century 21 Exposition Medal

The Commission conferred with Mr. Alfred Rochester, Executive Director of the Century 21 Exposition, Mr. E. W. Stimpson, special assistant to the Director, and Mr. George Tsutakawa, sculptor, on the design of a souvenir medal for the Century 21 Exposition. Mr. Tsutakawa explained the symbolism of the two sides of the medal using plaster models. The members suggested that the reverse side of the medal was too complicated and that when the model was reduced to coin size the significance of the design as an attempt to portray space would be lost because of the diminished size. It was suggested that perhaps a design embodying satellites in orbit would more readily express man's efforts to explore space. Mr. Tsutakawa replied that he had considered that approach but had rejected it because it is widely used by many corporations and has become a commercial symbol.

The members recognized the sincere effort of the sculptor to avoid overworked symbols of space exploration and to achieve, instead, a unique expression of his theme. Accordingly they approved the design as presented. The Secretary was directed to prepare a letter setting forth the Commission's approval.

EXHIBIT I

Mr. Alfred Rochester then explained to the members some of the history of the Century 21 Exposition and some of the features such as a monorail which will run to the exposition from downtown Seattle and a building which will become a recreation and civic center when the exposition has ended.

f. Freer Gallery of Art

✓ Inspection of Proposed Acquisitions

In accordance with the usual custom, the Commission visited the Freer Gallery of Art, where they inspected a number of works of art proposed for purchase. The Commission approved the items for purchase. EXHIBIT J

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

C. L. Martin

C. L. Martin, Counsel

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
MARCH 15, 1961

Order of Business

AM

9:30

1. CONVENE. ROOM 7000. INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

2. SUBMISSIONS-INTERVIEWS:

9:35

a. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, PUBLIC BUILDINGS SERVICE:
(Mr. Roland J. Snyder, Director, Architectural and Structural Division, Public Buildings Service; Mr. Clarvoe, Public Buildings Service; Mr. R. S. Walleigh, Associate Director for Administration, National Bureau of Standards)

(1) National Bureau of Standards - Reactor Building

(2) National Bureau of Standards - Laboratory Group Landscaping

(3) Renovations to State, War and Navy Building

b. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC: (Brigadier-General F.J. Clarke, Engineer Commissioner; Mr. H.L. Aitken, Director of Highways; Mr. G.I. Sawyer, Deputy Director for Engineering, Design, & Research; Mr. E.D. Burke, Eng'r. of Design, Bur. of Engrg, Design and Research; Mr. J.J. Grady, D.C. Bridge Architect; Mr. W.J.H. Hough, Mr. R.F. Larson, architects, of Harbeson, Hough, Livingston & Larson)

(1) Federal Aid Interstate Highway Sign Standards

(2) Eleventh Street (Anacostia) Bridge

(3) D.C. Approaches to Theodore Roosevelt Bridge: Approach Structures 1205 and 1206.

10:45

c. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REDEVELOPMENT LAND AGENCY:
(General James Malleson, Mr. Allen MacPherson, Mr. David Bolkert of Ewin Engineering Corporation; Mr. W.V. von Moltke, architect, Mr. J.R. Searles, Jr., Executive Director, RLA; Mr. Stanley Sherman, RLA)

Tenth Street Mall

10:45 - D.P. should be moved to former view on mall.

- (✓)
(✓)

Set up
more
app.

(✓)

app. present

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

20 March 1961

Dear Mr. Moore:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on March 15, 1961, conferred with representatives of the General Services Administration and the National Bureau of Standards, who presented preliminary designs for a Reactor Building, which is to be erected as a part of the facilities of the Bureau of Standards near Gaithersburg, Maryland.

After carefully studying plans and a rendered perspective, the members agreed that the design was in general, satisfactory. They also felt that the general appearance of the building would be improved if the chimney were to be moved away from the main mass of the building, making it a free-standing element. They felt that the treatment of the entrance bay was complicated, and suggested that the window wall and door be kept in line with the other bays of the facade. They suggested that the location of the vestibule should be restudied as a part of this program.

Your representatives agreed to study these suggestions and to make the changes if practicable.

The Commission thereupon approved the design as presented with the two suggestions mentioned above.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L.R. Wilson, Secretary

Honorable John Moore
Administrator of General Services
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

1901

Class 12, 1901

The Commission of Fine Arts, in its report on the subject of the proposed new building for the Department of the Interior, has the honor to submit herewith its recommendations. The Commission has the honor to acknowledge the assistance of the Department of the Interior in the preparation of this report, and to express its appreciation of the interest and cooperation of the Department in the work of the Commission.

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20 March 1961

Dear Mr. Moore:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, considered the plans for landscaping the laboratory group at the National Bureau of Standards near Gaithersburg, Maryland.

After studying a scale model which showed the proposed landscaping and discussing the plan with your representatives, it was generally agreed that the planting plan for the various courts was too involved. It was recommended that the plan be restudied in order to devise a more natural scheme.

Further action was deferred until such a study has been made.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L.R. Wilson, Secretary

Honorable John Moore
Administrator of General Services
Washington 25, D. C.

clm/lrw/b

cc- Director, Div. of Archi. and Structural Design

EXHIBIT B

20 March 1961

Dear Mr. Moore:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, discussed with Mr. Rowland Snyder, Director of Architectural and Structural Division, Public Buildings Service, the proposal of the Region 3 Office to make certain roof and ornamental iron repairs at the Executive Office Building, 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. in accordance with recommendations made in a report, dated March 18, 1958, by George L. Walling and Arthur P. Davis, architects.

It was recalled that no opinion on the report had been formed at a previous submission, when razing of the building was contemplated in accordance with the plan of a Presidential Commission on Executive Office Space. It appeared that these plans would not now be carried out and that the building would not be razed.

Mr. Snyder pointed out that the proposed repairs involved the removal of most of the ornamental ironwork and the chimneys from the roof of the building. The members agreed that the chimneys, dormers, and ironwork were important elements in the total design of the building, and should not be removed. They also recommended against any extensive cleansing of the building and stated that they would prefer to have the natural patina of the granite retained. Any cleaning should be limited to the removal of excessive surface dirt. An offer was made to visit the site and examine any samples of cleaned areas in order to make a better determination of the appropriate method and degree of cleaning.

The copy of the above report which was submitted is being returned herewith.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L. R. Wilson, Secretary

Administration of General Services
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

20 March 1961

Dear General Clarke:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on 15 March 1961, conferred with representatives of the D. C. Department of Highways and Traffic, who requested advice on proposed designs for directional sign standards within the District of Columbia.

The members of the Commission recognized the need for large scale signs over and alongside highways and bridges, but they pointed out that unless great care is taken in selecting the size, character, and locations of signs in relation to their setting, there could be great harm to the appearance of the city. They stressed the need for simplicity in all aspects of placing signs on roads, particularly in the type and design of sign standards themselves. After examining the photographs of the examples shown, they preferred the more simple forms of rigid-frame rather than trussed construction. Any attempt to decorate the standards seemed unnecessary.

The Commission, in making these general recommendations would be interested in seeing applications of these sign standards to specific locations, at which time the total effect of the sign on both the roadway and the appearance of the surrounding areas will be more readily evident.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L. R. Wilson, Secretary

Brigadier General Frederick J. Clarke
Engineer Commissioner for the
District of Columbia
Washington 4, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

21 March 1961

Dear General Clarke:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, met with representatives of the Department of Highways and Traffic of the District of Columbia, and the architects, to consider the design of the twin-span bridge which is to be built across the Anacostia River at 11th Street, S. E.

It appeared from studying the perspective drawings that the size of the stones in the piers should be increased in order to be in scale with the bridge girders above. The members stated that they preferred the relationship between the piers and the span as presented in a design which was considered at a meeting of the Commission on June 26, 1958.

The Commission also expressed the opinion that the appearance of the bridge would be improved if the brackets were to be eliminated under the cantilever carrying the sidewalk and railing, as shown on the earlier drawing.

The Commission recommended that further study be given to these features before the preparation of final drawings. Time will be reserved, if you desire, for further consideration at the next meeting of the Commission on April 19th.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L. R. Wilson, Secretary

Brigadier General Frederick J. Clarke
Engineer Commissioner for the District
of Columbia
Washington 4, D. C.

EXHIBIT E

21 March 1961

Dear Mr. Miller:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, conferred with Mr. John Searles, Director of the Redevelopment Land Agency, and Mr. W. V. von Moltke, architect, concerning Mr. von Moltke's design for the proposed Tenth Street Mall, Southwest Redevelopment Area C. The members of the Commission were glad to see the development of the project, after a lapse of several years, and were gratified that the services of an architect of Mr. von Moltke's qualifications had been retained to design the project. After discussing the details of the design with Mr. von Moltke, the Commission approved the design in general with the recommendation that every effort possible be made to reduce the amount of grade required to bridge the railroad tracks. The members of the Commission agreed that they would assist the Redevelopment Land Agency in any way they can to resolve this problem.

In 1955 the Commission called the attention of the staff of the Redevelopment Land Agency to the crucial point over the railroad in the proposed Tenth Street Mall, and stated that the success of the design hinged on lowering the elevation of the tracks. The greatest criticism of Mr. von Moltke's design results from this condition that is, of course, not of his choosing.

The effects on the design of bridging the existing railroad tracks is not readily evident in the plans and drawings, until reference is made to the longitudinal sections, where the hump necessitated for clearance of the tracks becomes readily visible. The vista looking south from Independence Avenue along the Mall will rise uphill, and the L'Enfant Plaza and the Overlook will be cut off from sight. The members suggest that, if it has not already been done, a scale model of the topography should be made in order to show this feature more clearly.

For these reasons, the Commission of Fine Arts strongly urges that an attempt be made to have the level of the railroad tracks lowered in order to permit the Tenth Street Mall to cross them at a normal level. The Tenth Street Mall will then be able to serve as the connecting link to Southwest Washington from the Great Mall and to fulfill its original intention. The Commission believes that Mr. von Moltke's design as now drawn will accomplish this purpose only to a limited degree because of the condition imposed by the railroad tracks.

The members of the Commission have asked me to thank you for bringing the plans of the Tenth Street Mall to the Commission and to invite you to request their advice on any future redevelopment projects you may wish to show them.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

Honorable Neville Miller
Chairman
Redevelopment Land Agency
Washington, D. C.

23 March 1961

Dear General Clarke:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, conferred with representatives of the District of Columbia Department of Buildings and Grounds, and Mr. A. Stanley McCaughan, architect, regarding preliminary designs of an eight-story building which is to be erected on the grounds of the District of Columbia General Hospital for use as a Doctors' Residence.

The members of the Commission agreed that the general architectural treatment of the facades and arrangement of the building masses showed improvement over the plans which they had disapproved on October 18, 1960. They also felt that the change in location would bring the building into better relation with the other buildings of this large hospital group. It was noted that the height of the building would be greater than the adjacent building, and it was recommended that the same roof line be observed. The top story of the building seemed unfinished and restudy was recommended of the architectural treatment of this story to reduce the abruptness of the termination. The members were glad to learn that brick of the same color and shade as the brick for the other buildings would be used.

The next meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts will be held on April 19. If you will advise us, time will be reserved for consideration of further developments in the design.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L. E. Wilson, Secretary

Brig. General Frederick J. Clarke
Engineer Commissioner for the
District of Columbia
District Building
Washington 25, D. C.

22 March 1961

Dear General Clarke:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting of March 15, 1961, conferred with representatives of the District of Columbia Department of Buildings and Grounds and Mr. Louis Justement, architect, concerning preliminary plans for the consolidation of the District of Columbia General Hospital in Southeast Washington.

Mr. Justement, through the use of rendered perspectives, drawings and photographs, explained the program and the design of the additions to be made to the hospital.

The members approved the plan as presented and commended Mr. Justement for his solution of what they regarded as a difficult architectural problem. The Commission will be glad to confer with you on further developments of the plan when they are ready.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley
Chairman

by L. R. Wilson
Secretary

Brigadier General Frederick J. Clarke
Engineer Commissioner for the
District of Columbia
District Building
Washington 4, D. C.

EXHIBIT H

22 March 1961

Dear Mr. Stimpson:

I am writing you to confirm that the Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on March 15, considered and approved the design of the Century 21 medal, as executed in plaster by the sculptor, Mr. George Tsutakawa.

The members of the Commission were also interested to hear what you and Mr. George Rochester had to say about the plans for the Century 21 Exposition at Seattle, Washington, in 1962, of which the medal is commemorative.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

David E. Finley, Chairman

by L.R. Wilson, Secretary

Mr. Edward W. Stimpson
Washington, D.C. Representative
Century 21 Exposition
2000 P Street, N.W.
Washington 6, D. C.

Commission of Fine Arts

The Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, the Commission of Fine Arts, and Miss Katharine N. Rhoades, or Mrs. Eugene Meyer, as provided in Paragraph 4 of the Codicil to the Will of the late Charles L. Freer, have examined the following objects:

- 1 Bronze, Chinese, Period of the Warring States; hu, with 3 animal legs and 2 mask handles; inlaid with gold.
- 1 Gold ornament (part of belt buckle), Persian, Parthian or early Sasanian, 2nd or 3rd century AD; repoussé design of 2 boars in a thicket.
- 1 Pair gold vase handles, Persian, Achaemenian, 6th or 5th century BC; in form of rearing ibexes.
- 1 Metalwork (cloisonné) tripod vessel, ting, Chinese, Ming, 16th century; decorated with lotus, peaches and pomegranates; feet and handles mounted at later period, also wood cover with pierced jade finial.
- 1 Metalwork (gilded silver) ornament, Persian, Sasanian, 3rd century AD; oblong, depicting lion killing stag; lower right corner missing.
- 1 Metalwork (gilded silver) bowl, Persian, Sasanian; raised design of king on horseback hunting ibexes; damaged near rim.
- 1 Painting, Chinese, Ch'ing (early 18th century), by Wang Yuan-ch'ü; landscape.
- 1 Painting, Japanese, Shorakusai; man and woman in snowy landscape.

- 1 Set of 3 paintings (screens), Japanese, by Tonin (1620); 2-fold;
birds in landscapes.
- 1 Pottery dish, Japanese, Shibuemon; multicolor design.
- 1 Pottery jar, covered, Japanese, Imari; multicolor design.
- 1 Wood sculpture, Japanese, Meian period, late 10th-11th century;
Nireka Bodhisattva; Mandorla shows gilt design; right arm broken.

For the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

For the Commission of Fine Arts

RECEIVED

RECEIVED
FEB 12 1964
U.S. NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

2. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

3. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

4. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

5. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

6. The following information is being furnished to you for your information:

NOTED
MAR 15 1961
WASHINGTON, D. C.
RECEIVED
THE COMMISSION ON FINE ARTS